

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~**ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET**

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Thoughts on Reducing Bureaucracy 

FROM:

OTS/EXO

212 South Bldg.

EXTENSION

NO.

OTS-87/248

DATE

20 MAY 1987



TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.  
EA/DDA  
7D18 Hqs.

21 MAY 1987

Sent to OF

2 June 87

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OTS-87/248  
20 MAY 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Assistant to the Deputy Director for Administration

FROM:   
OTS Executive Officer

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SUBJECT: Thoughts on Reducing Bureaucracy

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1. We circulated Mr. Donnelly's memorandum (DDA 87-0700) widely within the Office of Technical Service (OTS). We received a particularly thoughtful response from  Chief, OTS Applied Technology Group. For your reading pleasure, Jack's memo is attached.

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2. For further discussion of these points, you may contact   
secure.

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Attachment

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## ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

Subject: Ideas Concerning Bureaucracy Reduction ☐

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From: 

C/OTS/ATG

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Date: 04/16/87

STAT

\* Date \*

To: (Officer designation) rec'd fwd'd init Comments:

1. Executive Officer  
OTS~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

16 April 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Officer/OTS

FROM: 

C/OTS/ATG

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SUBJECT: Your Request for Ideas Concerning Bureaucracy  
Reduction for Mr. Donnelly 

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1. This memorandum contains some ideas for reduction of bureaucracy which you can excerpt for an office response to the Deputy Director for Administration. There is no pride of authorship here; you may do with this document as you please.

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2. We have taken recently a small step forward in having Time and Attendance reporting done electronically for the Headquarters components. There is the opportunity to take a much larger step and to reduce the work necessary for such reporting even further. We should only report exceptions to the standard 80 hour work in a pay period. In an era when computers are reliable retainers of information and communication among computer systems is not unknown, there seems to be little reason to inform the payroll preparers that I have worked a standard 80 hours in a pay period. The computers should only care if I worked overtime, took leave of some kind, or did something out of the ordinary. When this idea has been suggested before, the argument has been that it would be too easy to abuse the leave system this way. I assert that an employee who is determined to abuse the system can do so just as easily by either mechanism so the "abuse argument" is a red herring.

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3. There is an opportunity for the Agency to take the lead in reducing the bureaucracy in the Federal Government. The SIS Officers (and the SES Officers government wide) must file a Financial Disclosure Statement yearly. It is no mystery to anyone who has filled out this form that it is clumsily designed. In fact, 99% of the information requested on the form is contained in the tax returns of the SIS Officers (or it better be if they hope to stay out of jail for tax fraud). Most of the remaining information is contained on the monthly statements of holdings from stockbrokers, mutual funds and the like. The few pieces of information not contained in documents such as those outlined above could probably be written on a single 5x8 card. Why not convince the people from the Office of Government Ethics who audit the Agency filings here that they can get the same information more clearly and with more authority and supporting documentation if they simply require a xerox copy of the Federal Income Tax form, all stock brokerage monthly statements for a given month and a single page listing of those few strange cases that would not be reported by this mechanism?

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SUBJECT: Your Request for Ideas Concerning Bureaucracy  
Reduction for Mr. Donnelly ☐

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4. The two ideas above are very specific. There is, I believe, a reason to address the question of bureaucracy in a more abstract way and to cite a few examples of activities to make a point. There appears to be a mindset in the Directorate of Administration that the process is more important than the result. This attitude, frankly, creates bureaucracy and when this attitude is diminished in importance, much - but not all - of the bureaucratic hurdles will be lowered significantly. When we elevate process to such a high status, we are forced to another posture that creates bureaucracy. We then have to treat people and situations with a least common denominator approach. If the process is supreme in importance, then everyone and everything must be codified in some way as to keep the process manageable, and it is exactly that attempt at codification which causes bureaucracy because people and events defy the codification and inexorably create "exceptions." The solution to this generic situation is not simple and is not amenable to regulatory action. It must be addressed in terms of attitude adjustment and behavior modification. ☐

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5. Related to the generic problem cited above is an attitude that is almost a logical consequence. We have an almost slavish addiction to "the way things have always been done" and an abhorrent reaction to novelty. Consider a few examples:

It is shocking that we continue to keep such a large fraction of our personnel files and our financial records in paper form. And it is even more shocking to see how out of date our financial records can be and how long it can take to correct a simple error in those records.

It is hard to believe that we still require ink to dry on paper to obtain approvals for various actions such as authorization to send out an request for proposal or waiver of the regulations to rent a car larger than a sub-compact.

It is amazing that it took until 1987 for the Agency to use bar codes on sensitive intelligence documents to aid in their tracking around the Intelligence Community. This idea was suggested in 1976 but was considered "radical" even though supermarkets were already using similar systems effectively for inventory control and inventory analysis.

It is hard to understand why it takes a year to hire a new employee. But it is not hard to recognize the emphasis on process vice result when one is briefed on the management of the inputs to the pipeline and not on the numbers of people who EOD to the Agency in a reasonable period of time. ☐

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6. Finally, I assert that bureaucracy is augmented by an attitude that is extant in the Agency requiring "objective review" of a panoply of things. I am not against checks and balances. I am against overdoing the review process. And I am adamantly opposed to the attitude that objectivity is conferred on someone by his/her ignorance of the details or nuances of a situation. Objectivity and ignorance are not synonyms. Yet we require people to review (or approve) actions of which they are - and in some cases must be - ignorant. As a personal example, I must authorize the T&A cards for people in ATG who work overtime even though they do so at remote locations where I cannot have any knowledge of whether or not they worked the claimed hours. Not only am I ignorant; but since ATG people work in four domestic "remote locations" often during the same hours, it would be physically impossible for me to obtain the required knowledge. I assure you that other examples of ignorance hiding under the cloak of objectivity can be cited and that such a posture creates bureaucracy. ☐

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7. I hope the information above is useful although I am sure you will want to make it less strident in tone. ☐

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